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A

TRUE COPPY
OF A
LETTER
FROM A
FRENCH PROTESTANT
DRIVEN TO
LONDON,
By the preſent PERSECUTION in
FRANCE.

Sent to his Friend in

DUBLIN

The 12*th.* of *October* laſt.

ether with a Relation of divers Proteſtants, (who have ſince arived Ireland,) of other Cruelties exerciſed againſt the Proteſtants in that Kingdom.

nd an Extract of another Letter from *PARIS*, Dated *November* 1. 1681.

DUBLIN,
ed by *Joſ. Ray* at *College-Green*, for a Society of Stationers, 1681

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A True Coppy of a LETTER *from a* FRENCH PROTESTANT *driven to* LONDON *by the preſent Perſecution in* FRANCE.

HAving received the Letter wherewith you were pleaſed to favour me, after that I, and my Family, with many others, had been driven from *Rochel* (by this flagrant Perſecution) to *London*, where we are now ſheltered, I judged it my duty to make you this return: That the account given you of the deſolation of Gods people in *France*, was nothing but Truth, eſpecially at *Poictu* and *Aulnix*, from whence the Perſecution is gone into the *Iſles*. *Monſieur de Marrillac* the Commiſſary hath exerciſed horrid cruelties in *Poictu*, who not being ſatisfied with that deplorable ruine he has brought upon all thoſe of the *Reformed Religion* there, and that he had ſold and diſpoſed of all that they had, He has further moſt inhumanely and barbarouſly treated their perſons, whereof ſome have had their Arms, ſome their Feet, and ſome other parts of their bodies burned: Some alſo have they hanged by the Feet, and by their Arms: Others have they cauſed to be ſhamefully dragg'd through the Streets. But finding all theſe ways of Cruelty nothing prevailing, they did then by force draw them into their Popiſh Churches, where they violently made them lay their Hand upon the *Evangile*; and this is that which they call Converſion.

The Commiſſary of *Rochefort* has done no leſs in *Surgeres*, *Mure*, and *Cyre*. In *Poictu* and *Aulnix*, more than Twenty or Twenty five Thouſand have changed their Religion; ſome

through fear, others for Money, but the greater part for saving their Goods, and delivering themselves from the fury of their Persecutors. Some have been forced to abandon their Native Land, and to convey themselves into strange Countries, *Switzerland*, *Holland*, *England*, *Ireland*, and elsewhere.

There be many in this City, who have found most favourable acceptance, and received considerable supplies, which indeed they have well deserved, there being few of them who have not forsaken all for the sake of the Gospel. And as to my self I have saved but One hundred Crowns of all that I could get for my Moveables which I was glad to let go at an undervalue. For now every Man sells, and the Papists, who alone are permitted to buy, do offer nothing almost of any value, and will buy no Lands. Truly the Desolation is great, above measure.

A little before I parted from *France*, *Monsieur de Carnavallet* Governour of *Brouage*, came abroad with his Troops, and entered into a Village betwixt *Brouage* and *Marenues* called *Hye*, where he used much violence, and constrained the greater part of Protestants there to revolt. Too few there be who courageously resist the temptations. For in some Churches in *Poictu*, consisting of Five or Six Thousand Communicants, (as in that of *Issoudune*,) there is hardly now to be found five or six: And a certain Minister, in a place where I was, did tell me, with tears in his eyes, that of his Congregation, of Five hundred Communicants, there was scarce Ten who had stood fast, and that even of these some were staggering. It is our Iniquity and our contempt of the Word of God that have brought these punishments upon us. O that God were pleased to be pacified towards us, and pitty his afflicted and desolate Church. They have hitherto assaulted but a few Towns, but they threaten to put Garrisons in them

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the next Winter. I have lately ſeen a Decree prohibiting all Proteſtants to ſell their Moveables under pain of confiſcation, and of Five hundred Franks Fine. In *Rochel* alſo they have enrolled a Decree, prohibiting them to depart the Kingdom, and it is well known that they have ſeiſed divers Perſons in *Calais* that were withdrawing themſelves.

Monſieur Brevel, a Miniſter of your acquaintance (who by an Order of the Preſidial of *Rochel* was interdicted from his Miniſtery for two years, becauſe he had viſited a Sick Perſon of his Congregation, whom they pretended to have chang'd his Religion two days before) was forced to leave the Kingdom: And this they have given out to be a Subornation, tho it be moſt certain that he did not change his Religion until ten days after that viſit, and that the Miniſter did not give him any viſit, but at the earneſt entreaty of his Wife, and his other Relations. All of the ſaid *Monſieur Brevets* Friends did judge ſuch an interdiction for two years, under the preſent circumſtances of time, to be an abſolute and eternal prohibition: And that there was no more juſtice to be expected from the Parliament than they found from the Preſidial: Whereupon he thought himſelf obliged to repair to this City, where he has been theſe four days. So great is the Injuſtice done to him, that the very Judges who Condemned him, could not but acknowledge his Innocence: But for juſtifying themſelves, they have ſaid, that the conſtitution of the preſent times did not favour him. And now he is gone from *France*, with nigh Two hundred Families, which this raging Perſecution has chaſed from their ſeveral Habitations.

Rochel has been hitherto exempted, but if God do not concern himſelf it will not be long ſo: for the Commiſſary declares they are this Winter to be dealt with at the ſame rate others have been. There is a number of Perſons reſolved to depart the Kingdom, notwithſtanding any change that

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may fall out. Many are already gone, and more are dayly going. Above Six hundred Seamen have already eſcaped in ſmall Fiſhing-Boats, and are arrived in *England*. Now, Sir, behold our preſent deplorable condition.

That which you did write unto me has much rejoiced many perſons here, and I hope they may ſhortly repair to the place where you are; for ſome numbers have arrived here, to compoſe themſelves a little, and the better to determine and reſolve upon the places which they ſhall judge moſt convenient for them: And I hope that ere it be long you may ſee a pretty number in that Kingdom of *Ireland*, whereof you have given ſo good a Character. I pray God to guide them in the beſt way. *Monſieur de Lezement* Miniſter of the *Rochel* is likewiſe ſuſpended of his Miniſtry, againſt whom they have iſſued a Decree of Interdiction, until the deciſion of a Sute they have ſet up againſt him, upon moſt falſe accuſations be at a cloſe. I ſuppoſe this Interdiction may not always be continued, but taken off, for their deſign is to remove the moſt able of our Paſtours, as they did *Monſieur de L'orty*, and think they have gained a great point, when they prohibit them the exerciſe of their Miniſtry. The Temple of *Sonbize*, is appointed to be razed to the Foundation, and a fornight ago the Maſs has been ſaid in the Temple of *Tremblade*. Now judge what hope of things we can have.

Since the writing of the aforeſaid Letter, there be more Proteſtants arrived in *Dublin*, being forced by the ſeverety of the growing Perſecution, to preſerve and provide for themſelves, who further affirm that there be many more, and greater outrages committed againſt the Proteſtants in *France*, than what is mentioned in the ſaid Letter. And that the Dragoons in *Poictu* did cauſe a Miniſter to be ſhut up in a Chimney, at the bottom whereof they caſt ſome moiſt rotten Hay,

Hay which they ſet on fire. But finding that he was ready to be ſtifled, they forbore to Torture him any further. And that the ſaid *Sieur de Carnavellet* did very barbarouſly cauſe the Nails of two Inhabitants of the ſaid Town of *Hye*, to be torn off them: And further that the Commiſſary of *Rochefort*, carried with him ſome of the Militia of the *Province*, and menaced one of the chief Inhabitants of that place, proteſting that if he did not forthwith renounce his Religion, he would cauſe him to be hanged: And the ſaid Gentleman anſwering that he was ready to ſuffer death. The Commiſſary replied, That the puniſhment was too gentle, he would have him to be burned. And when he had cauſed a Fire to be kindled, the Gentleman uncloathing and preſenting himſelf to embrace the flames, the people who were with the Commiſſary, deſerted him and went away: whereupon the Commiſſary caſting out horrid Blaſphemies, and a flood of injurious words, did drive him away.

The extract of a LETTER *from* PARIS, November 1. 1681.

I Forgot to tell you, that a fortnight ago a Decree of the *Ballieu* of *Charenton* was delivered and intimated to the Conſiſtorial Members of that Church, prohibiting us, within the Precinct of that Dioceſs, to call the Roman Catholicks, Papiſts, under the penalty of 500 Franks, and bodily puniſhment. That in our Prayers we ſhould no more ſay, *We pray for our brethren who are detained under the Tyrranny of Antichriſt*,

christ, thereby understanding the Pope. To insert and affirm in our Confession of Faith, *That Purgatory, the Monachall Laws, and the Orders of the Clergie, were the devices of Satan*, under the same pains to be inflicted upon those that shall sell, or be found to have any Books containing any such things. And in speaking of their Sacraments, not to use the words, *The God of the Messe*, but to speak of it with all Reverence, and when we do any where rencounter it, to put our selves into such a Reverend posture as becomes so august a Sacrament, under the penalty of 500 Franks, and further exemplary punishments. They have writ to *Monsieur de Ruvigni*, who is at the Court in *Alsace*, to have this Sentence abrogated, but have not hitherto received any Answer, which is grievous, for the time allowed for giving obedience thereunto doth expire to morrow: So that if the Minister should continue to pray the next day, according to the ordinary Form he runs a risk.

FINIS.